

# Nation

Volume 20, No. 09 • March 8, 2013



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## **Appointment Notice:** **Lawrence P. Katapatuk**

Mr. Henry Mianscum, Director of Capital Works and Services is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Lawrence P. Katapatuk as the Regional Housing Planner of the Capital Works and Services Department.

Mr. Katapatuk previously worked for the Cree Board of Health and Social Services as Planning and Programming Officer (Activity Team Leader) for the Multi Service Day Centre (MSDC) from 2005-2013, and for the Cree Regional Authority as Technical Services Clerk from 2001-2005. He was also employed on housing files that included the Capital Projects Database, Eeyou Miichuuwap Committee, and the First Nations' Housing Conferences.

Mr. Katapatuk is a Cree from the Waskaganish First Nation, a high school graduate, attended college in North Bay and Montreal and is a certified New Housing Inspector.

In his new position, he will be responsible for planning, developing and leading the housing strategy in the Cree communities, monitoring its implementation, as well as being responsible for its budgets and reviewing its programs. He will promote the use of the housing demand to strengthen the Cree economy and study new opportunities. In addition, he will instigate a rationalized approach to maximize economic benefits, reduce costs and encourage entrepreneurs to capitalize on the private housing market.



Lawrence P. Katapatuk will be based at the Capital Works and Services Liaison Office in Val d'Or, Quebec and can be reached at the following coordinates;

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# Charlie's love will live on

by Will Nicholls

As a young person growing up in Mistissini I was unsure of my place in life. More often than not, children learn from those who are older than they are. Outsiders blithely refer to them as Elders but I knew something they didn't. My mother taught about the "Great Ladies" in the community and that applied no matter what sex a person was. You took your life lessons and teachings from those who had something meaningful to share.

That was how I thought of Charlie Etapp. He had a powerful presence in our community. He was a person who followed the Cree traditional spiritual lifestyle, one who knew the spirits. I was fascinated with that and hung around him. He was patient with me and while I did not become a disciple of his teachings I still learned many lessons from him that helped make me the person I am today.

Of course, there were those who questioned him and others who welcomed his help. What I took from the way he lived was something I will pass on to others. He taught me that the concepts of right and wrong that people will often tell you to live by, in the end, only belong to them. The important thing is to remember that you are the one who determines what is right and wrong for yourself and those you care about.

Charlie was a man who freely expressed his great passion and love. The story of his heartbreak over his first wife's death showed that. Then, much later on in life, the power of his love again was demonstrated when he put aside his traditional spiritual practices to join his beloved late wife Louisa's church. He showed that love to me whenever I would visit and, in return, I loved him for that. I can and will always remember the spark in his eye that was grounded by a real smile when he taught me something he felt I should know. It was at times just a moment watching how he treated family and others he loved.



Charlie Etapp  
March 12, 1916 to February 16, 2013

He was one of the most open people I've had the privilege to meet. Charlie shared his life and his knowledge easily and calmly with a sense of humour. You could see that when *Charlie Makes A Drum* was filmed by Rezolution Pictures. Not only did he show his skills in making a drum but explained what it meant. We all laughed at him telling what a catch he was because he could make his own snowshoes. Of course, you could see the mischievous humour when he asked Louisa if he should drum one more time.

His sons have told me of hunting trips they had with him and how even in his elder years he was still part of the land. He has gone to his rest, his final one, and I wish him and his family well.

There are those who we know we will miss but I am thankful to have known this man enough to have learned from him and to regret that others will no longer have this opportunity.

Your life and who you were is something we will all have to live up to as human beings. Rest well my friend and teacher, until we meet again.

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Butterflies Go Free exposition at the Botanical Gardens

photo by:  
Amy German

## A woman's life

by Sonny Orr



It was once said that the Creator made woman before man and she was enamoured with one of the demi-gods and still is to this day. The Creator, frustrated with the way things turned out, made woman out of man and the rest is basically the birds and the bees and all that other stuff. Today, woman is the same as man and that's a good thing, as we are all human.

As we look to the past to see the life of women in general in North America, we wouldn't be here without our mothers, sisters and friends. In this nation, women have taken the forefront in breaking down barriers and sexism, abuse and other awful things that women have had to endure, and still endure today, to create a better future for all.

Sometimes, entire societies and cultures have had to change and this is especially notable in our First Nations and Inuit communities. Many women take on daunting roles and succeed at their leadership and come out as chiefs, mayors, federal and provincial ministers, governors general and this world is a better place to live in because of the efforts of these women.

Back in the day, without a woman by your side to clothe you and feed you, you were considered to be a poor quality man and shotgun weddings were a result. Many women have had to go through this process, but hey, it worked for that era. Today, the choices are much more open to women and again, as a result of these many wise choices, our lives have improved.

For the single-parent family, life is always harder to deal with, but as many grownups can attest, enduring life is the greatest teacher, especially with mom right there to back you up when times were rough. Today, life has different challenges that everyone must face and for the betterment of all, women have now come to meet those challenges with their incredible resources and capacities. It awes me to know, that at high-powered conferences, facing the media on occasion, or running a community that these ladies go home and carry out motherhood duties. I am still awed.

Back in the day, giving birth was a different experience, as one uncle of mine told me about his birth, which was in the middle of a river on a sandbar. This was after a long day of paddling and the closest place to have a baby was on the nearest land, a bare spot of sand that showed up at low tides. After the delivery, my gogum went on to paddle the rest of the day to camp. That was the way life was back then, and the toughest and kindest people were just like my granny. It was just the way it was, take it because you can't leave it or ignore it. Whatever life threw in her path, it was just another day to live out.

Then, after the birth of children, it's usually the mother who does the rest of the child rearing, until someone notices that there's an extra hand around to help out with the chores. Life goes on...

I know one thing for sure, without women around; life would be a lot harder.

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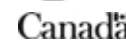
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# Developing the South

## A Chisasibi delegation trolls Quebec towns for business opportunities

by Jesse Staniforth

news

Businesses from non-Native communities often venture north to Eeyou Istchee to develop entrepreneurial opportunities within the Cree Nation. In late January, however, the Cree Nation of Chisasibi decided it was time to return the favour, sending a delegation of six representatives on a three-day commercial tour of Malartic, Rouyn-Noranda, Val d'Or and Amos between January 22 and 24.

"My goodness, it was a crazy schedule," said Chisasibi Deputy Chief Daisy House-Lameboy of the tour. "We started every day at 8:30 in the morning and didn't finish until 10:00 every night."

House-Lameboy was accompanied by Chisasibi Chief Davey Bobbish, as well as the community's Director General for Operations (DGO), Assistant DGO, Economic Development Officer and the director of the Chisasibi Business Centre. Also on the trip were representatives from the Secretariat to

interested in doing business in Chisasibi. In each city, the delegation gave business and municipal leaders a Power-Point presentation about the history and culture of their community and the purpose of their trip, which was to find the means to become economically sustainable.

"We're focusing on economic development for the community of Chisasibi," said House-Lameboy. "We're trying to find ways to sustain ourselves and our community. Not just relying on agreement funding or [operations and maintenance] funds, but looking at ways to make money. We have the Chisasibi business development group that can create businesses. For example, we're going to build a hotel in the fall — the community can own it, and it goes back to the community. We can do infrastructure and town expansion, or even paving. These are all ways to make money for the community."



Chisasibi Deputy Chief Daisy House-Lameboy

"THERE'S A DEMAND FOR HOUSING IN THE COMMUNITY WITH A BACKLOG OF 400-PLUS, SO WE NEED TO FIND WAYS TO BUILD MORE HOUSES. REGULARLY WE BUILD ABOUT 30 EACH YEAR, BUT THAT'S NOT ENOUGH."

the Cree Nation Abitibi-Témiscamingue Economic Alliance, along with former Grand Chief Ted Moses and his family.

"We were on adrenaline the whole time," said Deputy Chief House-Lameboy. "The experience was a real eye-opener, and very exhausting."

The delegation toured multiple sites and businesses in each community; attended meetings, lunches, and dinners; introduced their community to businesses; and participated in networking with government figures and companies

A priority is housing construction.

"There are a lot of projects that we need to tackle," she said. "There's a demand for housing in the community with a backlog of 400-plus, so we need to find ways to build more houses. Regularly we build about 30 each year, but that's not enough — and that's not even including Health Board and School Board housing. The Health Board needs close to 200 units just for Chisasibi alone in the five-year agreement that they just

signed, which they have five to seven years to implement."

Deputy Chief House-Lameboy says the business trip will bring good things to the community — though she's not yet ready to be specific about what they might be.

"There are some things we'd rather not discuss just yet. But there are other ideas on the table, new ways of approaching business in the community. Sixty percent of the community is under 30 years old, so we want to create jobs and training to develop our community and our youth."

Above all, the purpose of the trip was to explore possibilities for Chisasibi to determine how best to move the community forward.

"We need to know what's out there and available, what's viable and what's feasible, and what our budget is for that year," she noted. "We will always focus on housing, because of our backlog. That's just one example of job creation: the continuous work of construction. But there are other options out there — what are they? That's what we need to focus on to create jobs for the community, for our youth. But we'll have to have partners. We can't do this alone."



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# **Silent no more** **Memorial march builds momentum**

by Akiva Levitas

Thousands participated in Valentine's Day actions and marches across Canada to demand justice for missing and murdered Aboriginal women and to build a safer future for their surviving sisters.

For the past 22 years the Memorial March for Missing and Murdered Women has been held on February 14. According to the Native Women's Association of Canada, over 600 Aboriginal women have gone missing or been murdered since 1980. The Amnesty International report "No More Stolen Sisters" estimated that Aboriginal women are five to seven times more likely to die of violence than non-Aboriginals.

This year, the march followed a report alleging systemic sexual attacks and abuses by RCMP officers against Aboriginal women and girls in northern British Columbia. Released by Human Rights Watch on February 13, it released details of shocking abuses unearthed during the organization's investigation into the lack of action on missing and murdered Aboriginal

women along British Columbia's infamous Highway of Tears.

Missing Justice, CKUT radio and Concordia University's Centre for Gender Advocacy organized the Montreal event with support from the Idle No More movement. Over 700 marchers gathered at the St. Laurent metro station, where speakers voiced their anger at the injustice facing missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

"We want action! And we want action now!" said Bridget Tolley as she addressed the crowd. She came to demand justice for her mother, Gladys Tolley, who was struck and killed by a Quebec police cruiser on October 5, 2001. "I want an independent investigation into my mother's death. We want all our missing sisters found. We want the cases that are unsolved, solved."

Katsisakwas Ellen Gabriel has fought for Indigenous rights since the 1990 Oka Crisis erupted in her community of Kanasetake. "Tonight is a night to remember our sisters who have been murdered and assassinated," Gabriel

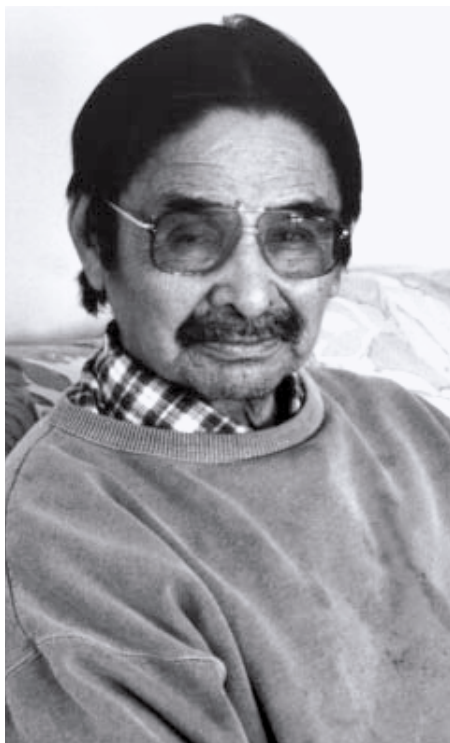
told the crowd. "It isn't 500 women, 600 women, 800 women, it's millions. Since the time of contact, it's been about economics. It's been about a land grab. And the best way to destroy a nation, a nation that lives sustainably on Mother Earth, was to attack the women."

A powerful performance by the Reproductive Justice League Choir galvanized the crowd as many joined in on the singing.

The largest of the marches took place in Vancouver, where the event began in a commemoration for a Coast Salish woman murdered in the city's Downtown Eastside. Over 2,000 participants gathered this year to remember the many others who fell victim to violence that received next to no attention from Canadian authorities.

Despite the growing outcry against the injustices facing Aboriginal women, ongoing abuses demonstrate that the struggle must continue. At the very least, the annual Memorial March for Missing and Murdered Women ensures that our fallen sisters will not be forgotten.

photo by Irina Gaber



Sandy Masty

## Elders pass on

On February 20, the community of Whapmagoostui lost beloved Elder and longtime Clergyman Sandy Masty. Born in 1925, he passed away at age 88. The love and tenderness he showed to his fellow community members will long be remembered. His legacy lives on through his family and the people whose lives he touched throughout his time as spiritual leader for his community.

The community of Mistissini also experienced a loss with the passing of Elder Minnie Brian Jolly. Their physical presence has departed this world but their spirit lives on.

## Attawapiskat ice road blockade

A standoff between residents of the First Nation of Attawapiskat and the De

Beers' Victor diamond mine ended without incident on February 22. A team of officers from the Ontario Provincial Police force arrived to enforce a court order to remove the barricades that had been set up for the three-week blockade only to find that they had been taken down prior to their arrival.

This is the second blockade of the ice road leading to the diamond mine, located 90 kilometres west of the community, with the last one ending February 8 after De Beers and Attawapiskat agreed to focus on employment, training, and the housing situation in the community as well as reopening the Impact Benefit Agreement signed between the two parties.

Chief Spence has said that she wants the problem resolved in order to focus on future exploration projects in the traditional territory of Attawapiskat. The future of the mine is up in the air, how-



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ever. The South African company is examining whether to continue operating the mine beyond 2018.

Transport vehicles have been running non-stop since the blockade was lifted in order to deliver about a year's worth of supplies to the mine before the ice road shuts down. De Beers has said that it might not be able to deliver all of the supplies due to the blockade within the short time window left before the melt. It warned there could be temporary shutdowns and layoffs during operating season if enough supplies don't make it through.

## Duncan walks the plank

A minor scandal over an inappropriate letter gave Prime Minister Stephen Harper the pretext he needed to dump now-former Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan from his cabinet.

Duncan submitted his resignation February 15 after a small uproar over his letter of recommendation for a constituent. The letter was addressed to the Tax Court, which is considered inappropriate for a cabinet minister. Nonetheless, the sudden resignation was unexpected.

Harper appointed Bernard Valcourt to replace Duncan in cabinet. Valcourt previously served in cabinet as Consumer and Corporate Affairs Minister and as the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

"I am surprised and saddened upon hearing of the resignation," said Betty Ann Lavallee, National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. "He is a honourable man who was doing his best to improve the lives of all Aboriginal Peoples throughout Canada. His contributions in moving the Aboriginal Agenda forward will not be forgotten."

The resignation set off a social media firestorm, as many speculated over its timing. Mr. Duncan had increasingly been sidelined as the gridlock over major Aboriginal issues tightened and the Idle No More protests caught momentum. Observers felt Duncan had little influence over cabinet decisions on Aboriginal issues.

Mr. Duncan will remain the MP for the riding of Vancouver Island North.

## Cultivating cross-cultural business

March 12 and 13, the Eeyou Economic Group in collaboration with the Chibougamau Chamber of Commerce will be hosting an entrepreneurial symposium, "Towards the Development of Sustainable Partnerships in Northern Quebec," in Chibougamau.

Also on the event's steering committee are the Chibougamau Eeyou Friendship Centre and the Northern Entrepreneurship Centre. They are supported by an array of partners, including the Quebec's Minister of Finance and the Economy, the Cree Regional Round

Table on Social Economy, and Hydro Quebec, along with numerous private companies and also the Fonds de Solidarité FTQ Nord-du-Quebec.

The event is set up as a Cree, Inuit and Jamesian networking opportunity, "to encourage constructive discussion on a shared vision of partnerships in [the Northern region]," and promises a series of presentations on "the potential and viability of doing business regionally between all Northern Quebec entrepreneurs for projects, big or small."

To achieve its goals, the symposium has scheduled discussions on Cree Entrepreneurial Customs and Traditions (by Eeyou Economic Group President Sidney Orr and Eeyou Business Solutions' Jonathan Saganash), Inuit Entrepreneurial Customs and Traditions, and Jamesian Entrepreneurial Customs and Traditions (by James Bay Development Group Assistant Director Alain Coulombe). These seminars underline the symposium's goal of introducing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants to each other's cultures in the hope of cultivating respect and understanding for fruitful future dealings.

As well, there will be a panel discussion about "Sustainable Partnerships," featuring representatives from Hydro-Québec, the Cree Construction and Development Corporation, and two Jamesian organizations, plus more targeted discussions of such issues as networking and joint venture development.

Comic strip courtesy of Tundra Comics: [www.tundracomics.com](http://www.tundracomics.com)





Mackie from Cape May, New Jersey



Winter white camouflage gilly

## Hunting and Fishing and Outfitting, Oh My!

by Amy German

The 2013 edition of the Hunting, Fishing and Camping show at Place Bonaventure was a jam-packed hit that featured the latest in firearms, knives, fishing technology and outdoor gear.

This year's highlight was the booth hosted by Magnan Taverne, where many patrons enjoyed a cold one while filling up on a tasty menu of meat samples.

Juicy treats to devour at the beginning of the show changed the whole dynamic by ensuring that the enthusiastic carnivores in attendance were focused on the ultimate goal of their outdoor lifestyle. The free-flowing brews, meanwhile, encouraged a heightened sense of conviviality as patrons sipped, shopped, shared and listened with delight.

The first thing to catch the eye of my companion for this adventure, *Nation* Editor Will Nicholls, was a skinning knife manufactured by Browning.



Browning knife



What really piqued his interest about this particular folding knife was how handy, sleek and lightweight it was while also being, in his words, “really cool.” According to the booth host, Andre Guenette, these knives are very good sellers both for their appearance and their high quality and are available at Le Barron or online.

“Everyone wants one of these,” said Guenette.

As for rifles, Guenette was showcasing Winchesters and Browning models. While Winchester didn’t have anything new out on the market for 2013, he said, Browning is offering the Citori 725 Sporting, touted as the best shotgun ever built.

“It is much better balanced and it points very well and they have a really good trigger, that too has been improved,” said Guenette.

Heading over to Le Barron’s hunting gear displays, (they have several for different types of gear) Nicholls was automatically drawn to the winter white camouflage gilly. With its carefully tattered shreds, this high-quality garment is perfect to blend your cold-weather bush gear into the winter landscape.

Once again Le Barron and all of the other clothing retailers were flogging ladies’ gear, essentially smaller versions of the jackets they sell for men but with pink zippers.

Another fun product we discovered was the 3D Prairie Dog Self-Healing Target, perfect for live-action target practice. Ideal for all firearms, it reseals itself after a bullet passes through it. Retailers for \$88.94 at Le Barron.

J.P. Tremblay from Graywood Sporting Group was on hand to promote Under Armour’s cutting-edge long underwear.

“I am having a wonderful experience here today; there is a lot of traffic and ton of people inquiring about our Under Armour gear,” Tremblay said.

Under Armour isn’t only used by football and hockey players, it is also perfect for hunting and fishing because of its technology for compression and scent control. It seals you in but at the same time lets your body breathe so you still feel warm and dry.



The infrared cold gear also gives a hunter a stealth advantage, he noted. “This garment has a ceramic coating that reflects the heat back to your body,” said Tremblay.

Next, we encountered Gilles Stubbins from Nikon Canada, who was vaunting his cameras and scopes. “We have this brand new line, the PNM Series which is made specifically for the AR Guns,” said Stubbins.

He highly recommended the PM-223 Precision AR Optic scope as the best of Nikon’s new technology. There are now also apps that are available to help you

adjust your telescope from 0-100 yards. This scope started at \$219.

Jacques de Serre of Agence de Sport Tri-OMF was showcasing a series of muzzleloaders.

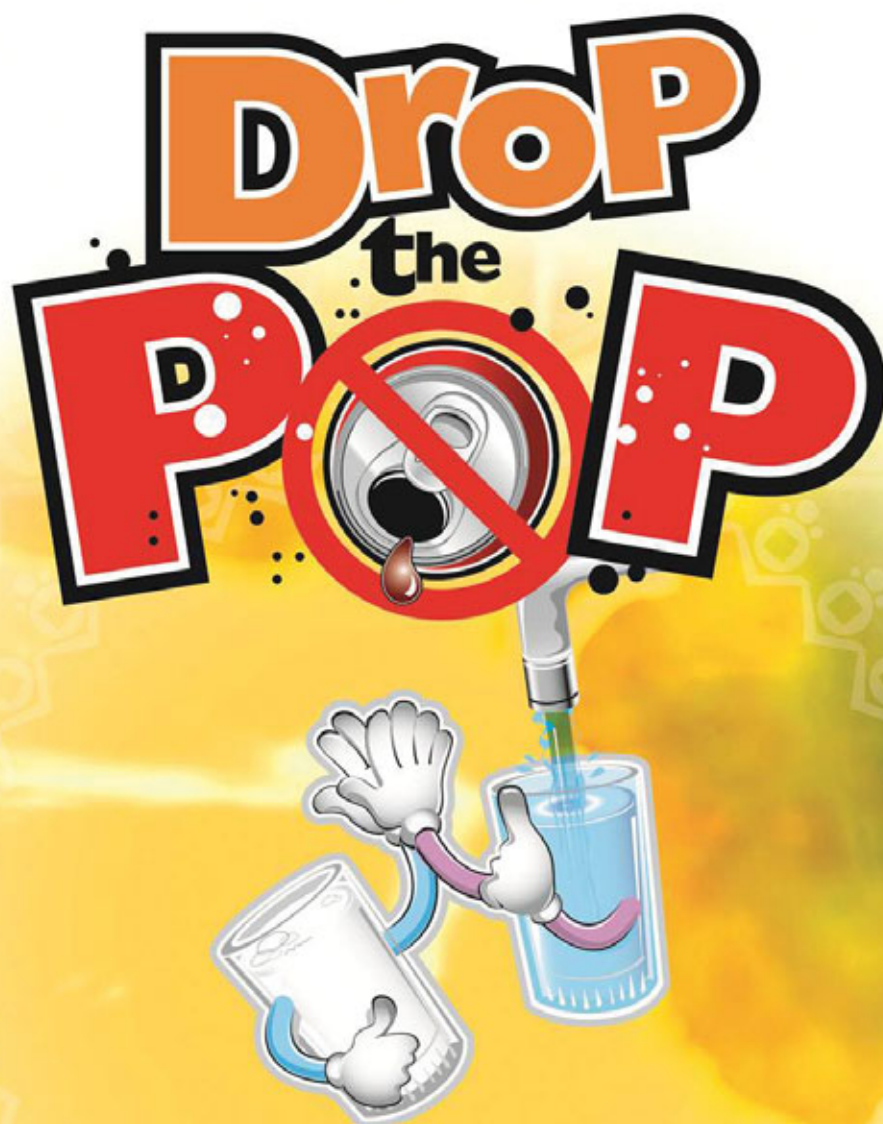
“If you are looking at mid-range and haut de gamme muzzleloaders you are going to come across Bergara barrels and those are custom made. They are really high-quality barrels, a much higher grade of quality than you would find on a regular muzzleloader. You can unscrew this barrel with your fingers after shooting also, because there is a patented system here and it doesn’t get dirty. The



Under Armour



3D Prairie Dog Self-Healing Target



**Look for local Drop the Pop activities in your community during Nutrition Month [March] and Oral Health Month [April]**



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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

[www.creehealth.org/dropthepop](http://www.creehealth.org/dropthepop)





rim acts like a seal and so it prevents the burn powder from getting into the breach plug.”

He went on to say that while muzzle-loaders are often considered luxury products, these ones are more affordable, retailing from \$250 to \$700.

One of the cooler items we came across was a duck decoy with mechanized flapping wings, a development that might comfort hunters who feel that live versions are getting wiser that feel those ducks are getting smarter.

Retailing for around \$200-\$250, this Edge by Expedite product is a great leap forward in duck decoy technology and is guaranteed to spark envy among your duck-hunting friends and family.

Also in the frivolous and fun category was Jim Shockey's Signature Product Heater Body Suit, perfect for colder days in the Eeyou Istchee bush. Like a camo sleeping bag with legs, it could make sitting for hours in a blind during cold weather a lot more comfortable. Find one at [www.heaterbodysuit.com](http://www.heaterbodysuit.com)

Among our favourite finds were the armoire gun racks that turn your firearm storage in an attractive but secure furniture showpiece. The craftsmen from Les Meubles de Chasse St-Omer were on hand to showcase the hand-made prod-



uct. One of them, Matt Leblanc, said they are custom made on order in the Gaspé region. They can cost anywhere from \$800 to several thousand and, according to Leblanc, are as secure as any other gun case on the market. For more info call 418-392-1958 or email him at [mat-leblanc@hotmail.com](mailto:mat-leblanc@hotmail.com)

Rheal Charlebois was again on hand with his incredible hand-crafted hunting calls and the crowd around his booth testified to the enthusiasm his products. Folks appeared to be buying up everything they could get their hands on. New

this year was a series of turkey calls and new acrylic calls. To find out more go to: [recalldesigns.com](http://recalldesigns.com).

Jocelyn Guertin of Loyall Foods, a producer of pet nutrition, was highlighting her company's products specifically developed for hunting dogs. We couldn't personally attest to the quality of the dog food, but we can certify that her dogs maxed out on the cuteness meter.

All sorts of fishing goodies were available throughout the show. We were particularly impressed by the cool-looking



Etic lures



Hand-crafted hunting calls

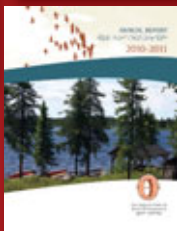
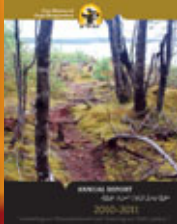


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Etic lures and products, especially the spoons embossed with fish photos.

"These products are great because we have been in business for 30 years as a local Quebec company. Price wise we are also very aggressive on the market, with lures starting at \$2.99 and going up to \$6.99," said Eric Belanger, Etic's lure and concept designer.

A number of American state agencies were promoting their region's hunting trips and we were pleasantly surprised to see Mackie from Cape May, New Jersey. He was on hand to promote tourism in his neighbourhood to offset the industry's downturn in the devastating wake of Hurricane Sandy last fall. The Nation met Mackie last year at this show and we were happy to once again see his high-wattage smile that was amplified by a glitter costume and the two-foot stilts he used to tower above his competitors.

"We are actually doing very, very well," Mackie said of the Cape May region. "Hurricane Sandy was not as bad for us as the media has been making it out. It passed right over our area and spared us.

"We are really, really resilient and the state is working now to repair the boardwalks that were damaged but things are going very, very well. We will all be open again for business before Memorial Day in May," he promised.

According to Mackie, Cape May County is an ideal tourist spot for people who want something to do round the clock and for those who need deep relaxation. With world-class casinos in nearby Atlantic City contrasting with the raw beauty of endless stretches of sandy beaches, it is the perfect place to fish (think deep sea tuna), surf, swim, eat, play, dance and dream. For more information: [www.thejerseycap.com/](http://www.thejerseycap.com/)

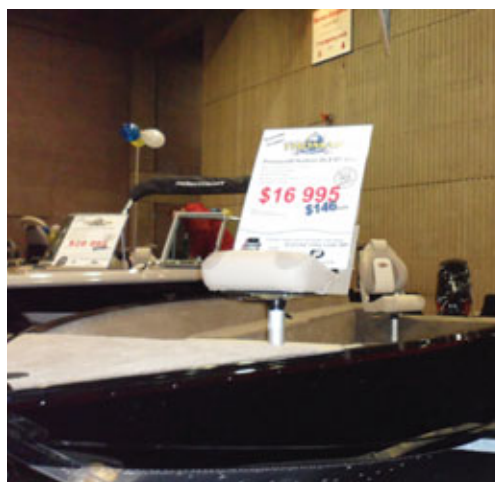
If trips to the Jersey shore, an armoury of weapons and an out-

door nut's gear fantasyland wasn't enough, the show also featured a number of vehicle displays, tall and small, including trucks, boats, ATVs, RVs and various types of multi-purpose tractors.

Nicholls was particularly interested in Crestliner's all-camouflage 1860 Retriever SC offered for \$16,599 from Gabouray Marine in Sorel-Tracy. It is a well-crafted aluminum boat that could comfortably seat a large Cree family on hunting or fishing outings. See it at: [www.crestliner.com](http://www.crestliner.com)

As we headed out of the show, we stopped by one more kiosk that featured a unique survival product, a fire starter called Instaflam.

According to Derek Trott, this is an all-natural product is that is ideal for anywhere you would need to start a fire, be it a home fireplace, a campfire or a survival fire. Available at hardware stores like Canadian Tire, what was particularly interesting



about this product was that it could get wet and still start a fire.


Find out more at: [www.instaflam.com](http://www.instaflam.com)

This year's event had a lot to offer visitors. For those interested in heading to next year's event, go to: [www.salonexpertchassemontreal.ca](http://www.salonexpertchassemontreal.ca)

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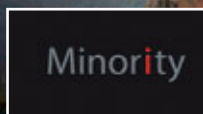


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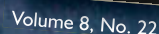
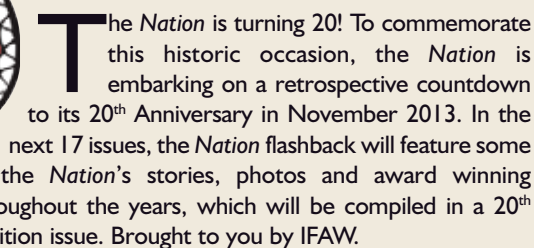
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[illegible]

This article is about 9/11 and what happened on that fateful day. I translated an article into Cree about some of the details and it was the Nation's very first page 5 news brief published entirely in Cree. Will Nicholls and I decided this would be useful for the Elders who do not read English. We wanted to make sure Cree Elders understood the images they were seeing on TV.

**Brian Webb**



# Favorite covers from Vol. 8 series



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# NATION BUILDER

A presentation of The Board of Compensation and  
the Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company



A TALK WITH

**Darlene Cheechoo,**  
*Chairperson of The Board of Compensation and Creeco*

A Cree woman from Waskaganish, with an impressive resume of a Masters of Law, Degrees in Common Law, Civil Law, Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Arts, she worked with various Cree entities. She was first elected to the CRA Board of Compensation in 2008, and in December 2012, she was elected Chairperson of BOC Creeco.

**We want to share the history of Air Creebec, can you please guide us Matthew?**

The beginning dates back to 1979. Following ratification of the JBNQA, the CRA was faced with a unique opportunity to extend its activities to the field of air transportation. Late Grand Chief Billy Diamond and Austin Airways led the creation of an airline belonging 51% to the Cree. In 1988 Air Creebec became 100% Cree-owned, and was

"Air Creebec has been recognized as one of the most successful regional airlines in Canada."

the largest commercial transaction ever completed by Canada's aboriginal people at that time.

**What is the mission and the goals of Air Creebec?**

Air Creebec's team members are honored and proud to be part of the firm. There is a high level of trust and mutual respect amongst team members, Creeco and clients. Creeco always places the welfare of the firm and that of its clients above their own self-interests. The firm is highly innovative in its delivery of excellent customer service and will always be guided by its principal purpose of contributing to the development and self-sufficiency of the Cree Nation while maintaining long-term profitability.

The following are goals determined by the board to be our priorities: profitability, longevity, stability, services to the Cree communities, self-sufficiency, leadership, transparency, Cree employment, and Cree involvement in Management and Development.

Air Creebec is carving out an enviable name for itself in the field of charter flights, where it is respected for its ability to quickly and efficiently react, not only for routine services

but also for emergencies, such as forest fires and floods. Our airline offers a VIP charter program for businesses, and we have planes dedicated to long terms contracts.

**Where is the head office and where does Air Creebec fly to?**

The head office is located in Val-d'Or with a staff of 55. We have a new office and hangar in Montreal with a staff of 72. We also have an office in Timmins, Ontario. We employ over 350 staff and more than 50% are Cree, this makes us one of the largest employers of First Nations in the region. We are proud of that fact!

We fly to all the Cree communities in Eeyou Istchee as well as into Val-d'Or and Montreal. We also fly into Timmins, Ontario and into the Ontario Cree communities of Attawapiskat, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Moosonee and Peawanuck.

**How would you describe the company today?**

Air Creebec started with 1 plane, a Twin Otter. From those humble beginnings it has evolved today to becoming the flagship company of Creeco. Today we have 18 planes. We have our own magazine called Destination and our website: [www.aircreebec.ca](http://www.aircreebec.ca)

We are fortunate that the late Albert Diamond left a great legacy in Air Creebec by hiring the best people in the business. We know that we are only as good as our team.

**What are the plans for the future?**

One of our key growth areas is partnering with other First Nations across Canada who may have very little to no capacity and have major projects coming up in their territories. With our years of experience and expertise and our large network, we can help them achieve success and take full advantage of the opportunities these projects offer on their terms. We also are already reaping the benefits of the mining that is going on within Eeyou Istchee.

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**[www.creeco.ca](http://www.creeco.ca)**







# A fighter for Native women

## New NWAC president Michelle Audette looks at the big picture for International Women's Day

by Amy German

With International Women's Day being celebrated March 8, the Nation checked in with Native Women's Association of Canada President Michelle Audette for her views on how well Aboriginal women are faring in Stephen Harper's Canada.

An Innu activist and well-known champion of Aboriginal women's rights, Audette was elected NWAC president in 2012 after working as president of Quebec Native Women Inc., the provincial Aboriginal women's lobby, for several years. She had previously served a short term as acting NWAC President in 2001.

**The Nation:** *How do you feel the landscape in Canada is changing for Aboriginal women and how do you see the bigger picture?*

**Michelle Audette:** I have travelled a lot with QNW and since September with NWAC and it seems to me that we have more women engaged in economic development, engaging in micro-busi-

nesses or businesses or other partnerships. So, I asked the chiefs that I met with from across Canada how much funding they got to address the issue; most of them said that they got between \$12,000 and \$20,000.

I was shocked also to listen to these women, either from remote communities or cities, to hear that most of them had experienced rape or sexual abuse. I

saying in terms of job creation for First Nations and these women.

**TN:** *What do you see as being the biggest threat against Aboriginal women and their children in this country?*

**MA:** Of course this is just my opinion but I feel like they are just being passed up by opportunity.

For example, take when a community is signing an agreement for development. In the past I had walked with the Innu women when they were against the Plan Nord. I also spoke to those who had been for it because they were working but it was such a small group.

It really made me wonder what is going on in our communities when there are employment or education opportunities. When I spoke to those who worked in education, I got the impression that a lot of women were too busy taking care of other people in the family (kids, parents, grandparents) and therefore missing out in the labour market. So this says that programs and services are not adequately adapted to our realities across Canada.

As a result, poverty is ever-present and we are still behind.

Despite this, we are now actually seeing more and more Aboriginal women going to college and university, despite the fact that they are often already young parents when they get there. They are facing this struggle.

While my colleagues at NWAC have been telling me that many women are starting businesses, I don't see this as



Photo: Kim Elliott

Native Women's Association of Canada President Michelle Audette

nesses or businesses or other partnerships.

While travelling I was able to listen to a lot of women and it is really sad to say but family violence is a huge issue. When I hear the federal government say that they are investing so much money, by the millions, into issues like family violence it really made me wonder.

realized that the statistics really weren't accurate.

I can see however that these women are so incredibly resilient, so strong and I was really impressed by that and they have this willingness to bring family into the forefront.

I just feel like there is a really huge gap between what the government is



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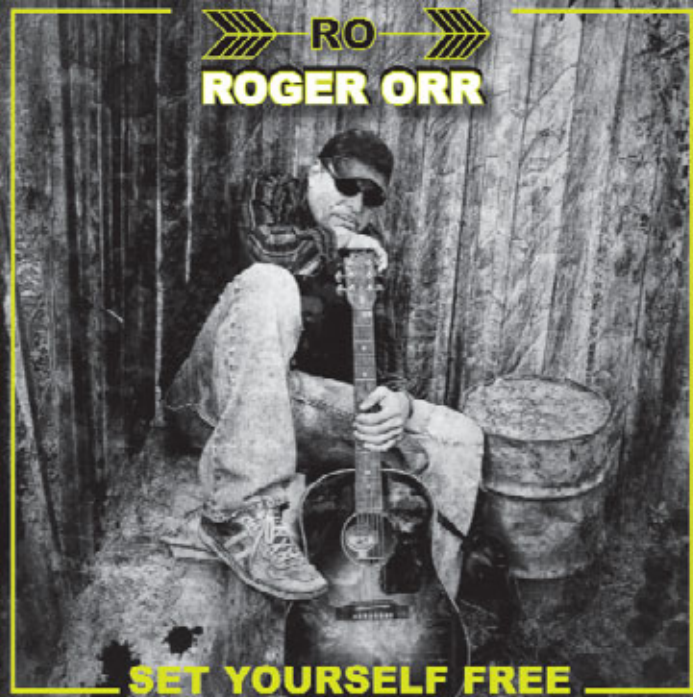
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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay



strong enough yet. We need to create more opportunities for them.

As the average salary for an Aboriginal women in Canada is around \$20,000 annually, significantly lower than that of women in the rest of the country, despite the fact that some are getting a post-secondary education, why are they still behind? Why is it that we always finish last?

The other challenge that I am noticing is that Aboriginal women, whether they live in the cities or the communities, don't seem to know that there are organizations out there just for them. It just seems so sad that, in 2013, with all of the social media and technology out there, that they are not aware that there is legislation, laws, services, programs and organizations such as NWAC, QNW, Ontario Native Women and so forth that can help them and support them.

This is a big challenge for us also.

**TN:** Moving on, how do you see this whole issue with the RCMP being accused of rape in northern BC when they are the organization that is getting all of the funding to address the issue of missing and murdered women?

**MA:** My take on this issue is that I see it as another strategy to undermine all of the beautiful work done by our previous president, Beverly Jacobs.

I wasn't there but I am capable enough to say that when I examined all of the work that had been done previously by NWAC's Sisters in Spirit (who compiled the first database on missing/murdered Aboriginal women) department I can say that it was really, really professional. This information was compiled for us by us.

So, if the RCMP is saying that our numbers are not accurate, how come they are complaining still three years later about our methodology and our database? It is just a political strategy to undermine this work and to that, I would like to toss the ball back into their court and remind them that we are talking about real live people and that people are still suffering.

It is as though they are playing a game when they should sit down and say, I think as a public organization like the



Native Women's Association of Canada President Michelle Audette

RCMP, maybe we should re-examine the way we are doing things with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities across Canada. In Quebec and Ontario we have tri-partite agreements for Aboriginal policing but in the rest of Canada it is the RCMP.

When you have non-Native women who have worked for that organization complaining that they were harassed by their own colleagues within the RCMP and then that story a few weeks ago with the RCMP being charged with molesting an 11-year-old child after holding them captive in their basement, it comes as a real wake-up call.

These systemic problems are actually happening to all Canadians but unfortunately disproportionately to us because we are the most vulnerable.

We are the most affected by extreme poverty and also evidently this discrimination is there. It is affecting our children and all of us: men, women and Elders.

After five weeks of research and interviews done in Northern BC by Human Rights Watch with Aboriginal women, some who were afraid to speak because their lives had been threatened, wow! This shows that we are only going to hear more horrible stories.

The government is trying to undermine Aboriginal women.

**TN:** Well, some have argued that this is a whole tactic in genocide, to go after a people's women.

**MA:** Mais oui!

**TN:** In light of all of this, what do you recommend and how will you address this?

**MA:** I am going to be focusing on my energy on the fact that we need to sit down with the head of the RCMP and also with the head of other police forces from across Canada as well as Aboriginal police forces and talk. We need to stop looking at who is right or wrong because we all know that there is a real problem right now and so how can we address this.

There are success stories in other provinces where the RCMP sat down with the families of victims and developed some tools to help the women and the frontline workers and also the police in the case of missing/murdered Aboriginal women.

Why don't we spread these stories?

Also, why don't we sign an MOU to put our energy and our passion behind changing these statistics?

Perhaps we could do some training with the police on who Aboriginal women, examining the history and who we are today so that they can know more about us. We did it with the police force training facility in Nicolet when I was president of QNW many years ago. We worked on issues of family violence and sexual abuse and since then we do this every six months at the facility.

Why don't we do this officially with the RCMP across the country?





## *The butterflies go free!*

*The Nation* steps into a winged-wonderland at the Botanical Gardens

by Amy German



If you are in Montreal and are desperate for some escapism in the dead of winter, the Butterflies Go Free exposition at the Botanical Gardens is like stepping into a magical fantasyland.

Tropical warmth and luscious greenery provide a welcoming environment for thousands of brilliantly colored butterflies and moths, carelessly flapping by those that have entered into their enclosure only to find themselves mesmerized by this unique exhibit.

"On any given day there will be between 1500 and 2000 butterflies and moths in that exhibit and within that it can go up to 75 separate species. So far there are over 40 species of butterflies and another 10 species of moths," said Maxim Larivee, the PhD entomologist who is head of research and collections at the Montreal Insectarium.

According to Larivee, the event is a wintertime favorite for locals and tourists alike as it is an incredible opportunity to reconnect with the brilliant beauty of Mother Nature during a bleak time of the year. For those who may not have previously heard of the event, this show is now in its 17th edition as the Insectarium and the Botanical Gardens put on this collaborative effort in the Gardens' greenhouses every winter. There is also a summertime event that is held in one of the Insectarium's outdoor facilities.







This year's event kicked off on Valentine's Day and runs until the end of April.

*The Nation* was able to take in the show on opening weekend and saw an incredible array of butterflies and moths. But, apparently this show only gets better over time.

This is because as the butterflies and moths become more familiar with their new greenhouse environment for the show, slowly but surely they become more visible as they create "pheromone traces" throughout the exhibit to identify sweet spots to feed and rest.

"The longer the butterflies spend in the greenhouse, the more [inclined] they will be to lay eggs, caterpillars will then hatch from the eggs and feed on the plants and you will then see chrysalis," said Larivee.

There are also cocoons and chrysalis on display in showcases that will hatch before your eyes. Larivee said that because of this, the show is great to see more than once.

This year's theme for the event is "Mysterious Monarchs" and there are about 500 of that species in the greenhouse. While the Monarchs are indigenous to North America, their species is in decline. The show aims to educate visitors on what they can do to help the species thrive.

"Monarchs are under siege in many different ways especially through habitat loss and habitat deterioration through their migration pathway. We are launching an initiative called Monarch Oasis. Our animators are offering instructions to the public so that they can build Monarch oases in their back yards," said Larivee.

The show is also a wonderful opportunity to learn about the many different species of butterflies and moths. The butterfly greenhouse brings together species from all over the world and from a wide variety of climates.

"What we want the people to take away from this show is to not only have had this incredible moment with nature but also a desire to know more and want to go back to see and learn more about butterflies and the wonders of the entomological world," said Larivee.

# Mapping the Matoush project

## An American geographer says the topography around Strateco's uranium exploration proposal poses unacceptable threats to the region's watershed

by Jesse Staniforth

The Grand Council of the Crees and others in Eeyou Istchee opposed to Strateco Inc.'s plan for advanced uranium exploration in the Mistissini area recently made an important new ally: Michael Hunt, director of a Philadelphia firm called Watershed Vision.

In mid-February, Hunt circulated a Google Map (viewable here: <http://goo.gl/maps/yHpEy>) in which he isolated the area of the proposed Matoush project against colour-coded areas to highlight the proximity of the project to the Albanel-Mistassini-Waconichi Wildlife Reserve and the Albanel-Temiscamie-Otish National Park. As well, he used the map to identify the paths of the watersheds linking the proposed project site to the Temiscamie River.

"If even a small amount of uranium or toxic by-products (including, but not limited to, arsenic, thorium-230 and radioactive waste) were to get into the Temiscamie watershed," Hunt said in the email accompanying the map, "the Wildlife Reserve and National Park would be permanently contaminated. Considering the dangerously close proximity of the proposed mines to this watershed, it is highly likely that contamination will occur, [risking the destruction of] the water supply of the nearby Mistassini community and the largest freshwater lake in Quebec, Lac Mistissini."

According to the Facebook profile for Watershed Vision, the company's mission "is to engage the public with rivers, parks and historic places through 360° photography and Google Maps, providing interactive, educational and creative tools to visualize and explore unique places virtually." The company wants to educate the public in by using Google Maps to "tell the story of a region, watershed, project or environmental threat."

At the moment, the Watershed Vision is working with the US National Park Service to design "Park View" and "River View" maps, using Google's "Street View" technology to document natural locations.

"My work isn't political," Hunt insisted. "I'm not against mining. They need an economy [in Eeyou Istchee]." But he says all forms of resource development, whether hydro, coal, or other sources, have drawbacks and dangers to be evaluated against the projects potential economic benefits.

"But reading about radioactive material in these freshwater areas, that crossed a line for me," he said. "My reaction was, 'Holy shit! You're putting a uranium mine 10 miles from your brand new national park! That is ridiculous!'"

Hunt has a childhood connection to Eeyou Istchee. Growing up, he attended and later became a counsellor at



The green-highlighted area on the map represents the Albanel-Mistassini-Waconichi Wildlife Reserve. Highlighted in blue is the Albanel-Temiscamie-Otish National Park. The red lines identify the path of the watersheds which drain from the proposed sites into the Temiscamie River.

Camp Keewaydin, which runs summer camps in remote Ontario locations and organizes canoe trips throughout the James Bay region. Between the ages of 10 to 26, he paddled many of the waterways in northern Quebec, including the Rupert and Eastmain rivers.

Last year, Hunt and a friend again paddled the Rupert on a photographic expedition to document the changes in the river, which grew into the Watershed Vision project.

"What I want people to take away from [Watershed Vision] is that there are digital tools for people to understand and study the effects of this kind of industrialization," he said. "With Google Maps, you can see the topography. If any toxins come into the system, you can see the direction they'll go. You can't lie about topography. It creates a very solid piece of evidence. No matter what you can say, this is the truth."

For instance, he noted that Hydro-Quebec created large, shallow reservoirs that are demonstrably more quickly heated in the spring. New mapping technologies helps demonstrate how these artificial water bodies are affecting migration patterns of birds and animals.

Aurèle Gervais, spokesperson for the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, says his organization has made "science-based" conclusions about the safety of the Matoush project, for which they granted a license last October.



"We're there to make sure licensees carry out activities so that the environment and the public will be protected," he said. "What we're trying to do as an organization is to ensure the public that activities [licensed by the CNSC] are safe. It's an attempt to reassure the public that we're here to regulate the nuclear industry."

The Matoush project has not yet been licensed for a mine, Gervais added, noting the CNSC has not yet received an application for mine construction. "In the case of a mine, the uranium ore would be dug out of the ground and transported to a mill, so I think the major concern that people have is the tailings that would remain," he observed.

Gervais was unable provide exact data on the risk of soil or water contamination from advanced uranium exploration by Strateco. Nor did scientists at CNSC respond to written questions before *the Nation* went to press. *The Nation* will publish their responses if and when they arrive.

Regardless of the CNSC's assurances, Michael Hunt is wary of the project.

"There's a hard reality that you can do everything safely, but can you control a truck whipping along those roads and spilling a tank [of toxic materials]? How can you assure me that will not happen? [Radioactive] material is a completely different substance: once it gets out there, you can't wipe it up like oil. And once that operation is up and running, even if they put cameras all over, there's minimal control they can have over it."

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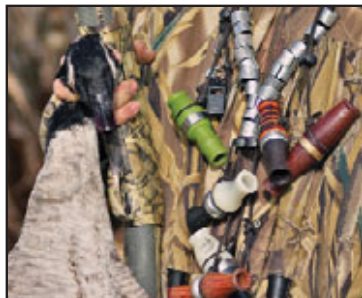
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# SAKAHÀN

## Indigenous art sparks interest at the National Gallery

by Christine Rigby

The Algonquin word *Sakahàn* means “to ignite a fire.” It appropriately represents the impact that Aboriginal artists have had on the global arts community over the last decade. Like a fire spreading outwards, Indigenous artists are leaving a lasting impression on more and more curators around the world. Many are taking note of the unique viewpoints they share, both as Aboriginal peoples and as contemporary artists.

That’s why a widely anticipated Indigenous arts exhibit at the National Gallery of Canada this spring could not be more appropriately timed. The collection, *SAKAHÀN: International*

*Indigenous Art* opens May 17 at the NGC in Ottawa.

The SAKAHÀN curatorial team consists of Greg Hill, Christine Lalonde and Candice Hopkins, who worked on this labour of love for three years. Alongside an international advisory committee they carefully selected artwork that would best represent the broad spectrum of Indigenous artists working today.

They crossed Canada and visited Japan, Kenya, Guatemala, Samoa, India, Finland, Colombia, Australia, Brazil, Taiwan, the United States and Greenland to compile over 150 works by 75 different artists. The exhibition showcases

both award-winning artists as well as those who are not yet recognized in North America to a presentation as diverse as its contributors.

Challenging though it may seem to find unity within such diversity of work, themes and media, co-curator Christine Lalonde explains that there is nonetheless a common thread through the show. One such theme, she says, is that of self-representation: “what it means to be indigenous in contemporary society in a world of romanticized stereotypes.”

Posing questions about identity, one’s place in world, the value of history and the impact of societal trauma,





Photo © NGC

Rebecca Belmore, *Fringe*, 2009, Cibachrome transparency in fluorescent lightbox

the artworks address questions that all can relate to, Indigenous or not. The curators hope the presentation will help “expand how people view Indigenous culture, politics and maybe even themselves.”

With such a wide range of media and subject matter, there is something for everyone at this exhibit. Some standout pieces: Jimmie Durham’s large scale outdoor sculpture “Encore tranquillité”; Jamasee Padluq Pitseolak’s “Handcuffs” in stone and caribou antler; Marie Watt’s interactive “Blanket Stories”; and Rebecca Belmore’s “Fringe”,



Photo © NGC

Jamasee Padluq Pitseolak, *Handcuffs*, 2011, Stone and caribou antler

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POSING QUESTIONS ABOUT IDENTITY, ONE'S PLACE IN WORLD, THE VALUE OF HISTORY AND THE IMPACT OF SOCIETAL TRAUMA, THE ARTWORKS ADDRESS QUESTIONS THAT ALL CAN RELATE TO, INDIGENOUS OR NOT.

a Cibachrome transparency in fluorescent light box.

The last of these, Belmore's Fringe, is both "poetic and powerful in its exploration of repulsion and seduction of at risk groups such as Indigenous women," Lalonde said, adding that the work displays "empowerment through portrayals of authority and grace."

Another excellent piece is Watt's "Blanket Stories", which depends on public participation for its success. Watt is asking people to incorporate themselves in her work by donating blankets and their stories for use in a series of sculptures. The intention is to create seven freestanding towers of blankets to represent the Indigenous teachings of seven generations.

In exchange for the blankets, Watt will send contributors an original silk-screen print of her own work. For more information on how you can participate in this project see the Blanket Stories section on the NGC website: [www.gallery.ca/sakahan](http://www.gallery.ca/sakahan)

Impressive, beautiful, unique and not to be missed, the SAKAHÀN exhibit runs from May 17 to Sept. 2 at the National Gallery of Canada.



Marie Watt-Three Sisters: Cousin Rose, Sky Woman, Four Pelts and All My Relations (detail), 2007 Wool blankets, satin binding, thread, salvaged industrial yellow cedar timber base

Photo: Courtesy of the artist

# Tales from the Amazon

## An Aymara storyteller shines a light on a disappearing way of life

Story and photo by Akiva Levitas

During an intimate evening in the cozy confines of Pointe Claire's Des Bons Voisins cabaret, celebrated Aymara Elder Roberto Alencar Zuazo recounted extraordinary stories of his life growing up in the remote Amazonian jungles of Brazil.

As the United Nations representative for his people, Alencar spoke out against a project to dam a large swath of his people's traditional territory. After his life was threatened repeatedly, Maurice and Hannah Strong, the founders of the Rio Conference on the Environment, brought him to Canada. For the past 25 years he has worked here as an interpreter and author recording the folk stories of the Aymara, Jamamadi, and Apurina peoples. The February 20 event in Pointe Claire marked the publication of his first book, *The Boy Who Spoke To The Birds*.

Most of Alencar's stories and legends are not recorded in books, however. That's not an accident: many Aboriginal peoples use storytelling and verbal transmission to keep their legends fresh in the minds of their young.

"There is great importance in passing down stories and legends," Alencar said. "I remember them because the transmission of oral knowledge is never forgotten. The love that children have for their parents ensures that we don't forget what they tell us."

The snowstorm raging outside the waterfront café contrasted with the warmth and energy emanating from the experienced storyteller. Sipping on hot beverages, the crowd hung on every word as Alencar shared his insights on the plight of the Aboriginals of Brazil.

Growing up in a remote village, he worked as a jungle guide for European scientific expeditions. "Going through the jungle it is important to be aware of your surroundings. You don't want to



Roberto telling his stories

disturb the wildlife and risk setting off a hive of wasps," he said. "It was an eye-opening experience being a guide for the Europeans because what was second nature to me was completely foreign to them."

During his time as a guide, Alencar learned several languages and grew close to the scientists he was leading through the jungle. After he learned he was being grossly exploited when being paid only a dollar a day for his services, one scientist helped set up a fund so that Roberto could go to school. He began earning more money and sought to help his fellow community members out.

Sadly, he observed, his fellow tribesmen have lost their knowledge of their traditional arts. "The people in my community lost their practice for arts after years of exploitation," Alencar said, recalling that missionaries would purchase artwork for a tiny fraction of what they pocketed by selling the pieces to museums and collectors.

Alencar is working to revive the region's indigenous art styles at the Amazon Arts School he co-founded with his sister Auxiliadora, who is also a well-known artist and activist.

Prior to the colonization of Brazil by the Portuguese, Native tribes used art as a way to pay respect to the natural forces of their lands. "When a boat was made the builder would incorporate the images of the animals that they would encounter, such as the alligator, the electric eel, panthers, and others," Alencar noted. On clay vessels used for water they would use images of frogs because his people believed that the song of the frogs was a more powerful prayer for rain than any song humans could sing.

After 25 years away from the Amazon, Roberto is planning to finally return home. He hopes to take with him his skills learned in Canada and pass them along to his people in the hopes of a brighter future for their culture.





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# CREE HOCKEY NEWS & NOTES

Story and photo by Daniel Coyle

## Jonathan Cheechoo returns to the pro ranks

Moose Factory's Jonathan Cheechoo has returned to the ice as a member of the American Hockey League's Oklahoma City Barons, the farm team for the NHL's Edmonton Oilers. Cheechoo, who scored 56 goals in 2005-2006 to win the Rocket Richard Trophy, joined the Barons at the end of the NHL lock-out and has made an immediate impact. Cheechoo has scored six goals over his first 12 games while assisting on nine others. The good start includes a club-record, five-point performance during a February 1 game against the Barons' division rival Charlotte Checkers.

The end of the lockout saw a number of young Oiler stars, including Taylor Hall, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and Jordan Eberle, return to the NHL club. However, Cheechoo's arrival should help OKC stay in the hunt for the eighth and final playoff spot in the AHL's Western Conference.

## Season ends for Nipissing Lakers

The Nipissing University Lakers' men's hockey team's hopes for a CIS National Championship were extinguished February 23 when the Lakers were defeated two games to none by the UQTR Patriotes in the second round of the playoffs. Led by Waswanipi's Vern Cooper, the Lakers surprised many by knocking off the defending CIS Champion McGill Redmen in the first round.

Cooper set the stage for the upset, scoring the winning goal on home ice in



Vernon Cooper of the Nipissing Lakers

Game 1. The Redmen bounced back in Game 2, scoring early and often to defeat the Lakers 4-1. But the Lakers prevailed in a Game 3 nail biter, disposing of the champs in close 2-1 victory. Unfortunately, their playoff success ended there.

Cooper, who enjoyed a successful five-year career playing junior in the OHL before a brief pro career with the Missouri Mavericks of the CHL, still has four years eligibility remaining in the university hockey ranks, and is expected to be an important part of the growth of the Lakers' young hockey program.

## Registration opens for Minor Hockey and Broomball Tourney

Registration is now open for part two of the 21st Annual Cree Minor Hockey and Broomball Tournament, taking place in Val d'Or April 11-14. Part 1 of the tourney took place in November.

Over 90 teams are expected to take part in 12 Open Hockey and Girls' Broomball categories. Open Hockey categories include Pee Wee

(Recreational and Competitive), Bantam (Recreational and Competitive), Midget (Recreational and Competitive), Teen Girls, Women's Junior, and Junior Hockey (Recreational and Competitive).

Teams competing in the Junior Hockey categories will be competing for cash prizes ranging from \$500 to \$3000.

Girls Broomball categories include Cadet, Midget, Juvenile and Junior.

Deadline to register is Friday, March 22. For more information, contact Freddy Schoeneich at 819-825-2648, or visit the Cree Hockey Players Facebook page.

## Waskaganish New Arena Grand Opening

Waskaganish's much-anticipated new arena will host its grand opening on the weekend of March 11. The festivities will include a torch relay from the Sarah Stephen Memorial Arena, a number of exhibition hockey and broomball games, an on-ice reunion of the original lineup of the Waskaganish Wings, performances by local artists and entertainers, and special guest appearances by radio personality and Montreal Canadiens fan favourite Chris "Knuckles" Nilan and by three-time Olympic gold medallist Caroline Ouellette.

The highlight of the weekend will be the unveiling of the name of the new hockey facility. For more information contact the Waskaganish Recreation Department or visit the Grand Opening event page on Facebook, which you can find via the Cree Hockey Players Facebook page.





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## UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

# Big drug pushers want you as a client

by Xavier Kataquapit

I have noticed so much advertising on television recently promoting drugs for depression. Often the drugs are pushed for just about anything approaching depression, anxiety, nervousness and all feelings related in some way. I find this very scary.

For many people and in particular those of us who grew up in difficult or dysfunctional places, the result has led to less-than-perfect balance in terms of emotions. I recall, after attending so many funerals, that by the time I was a teenager I had developed this fear or anxiety about death. It seemed so strange to me that we were born only to be visiting this life for a short time, as death would always be a reality. I felt vulnerable, fragile and uneasy about life around me in my remote First Nation. Life was fast and furious and I just never knew what to expect.

In my early teen years I found alcohol and then experimented a little with drugs. Suddenly, anything that had to do with some balance or normality went right out the window. My life turned into a haze and I felt half alive. I am so grateful that a cousin returned to the community and brought back the Alcoholics Anonymous program with him. Myself and many others benefited by being educated at the very least about how addictions work and the various ways it was possible to deal with these problems and have a life in recovery and sobriety.

There is no doubt in my mind that if I had not found this road to sobriety that I would have ended up having a difficult life with addictions and I probably also would have ended up on some kind of antidepressant. Rather, I was lucky to find direction, education and support from people so that I could deal with my addiction problems, depression, anxiety and imbalance. I also understand that for some these types of antidepressant medications are in fact a necessity so that a person can lead a better and more positive life. However, big companies that want huge profits have very much promoted

these drugs to millions of people and many who might not need them.

Although these drugs were first put on the market in the 1970s it was not until the 1980s when some giant U.S. companies began producing them that all of a sudden they were being promoted and prescribed for just about anything that ails a person. It became obvious that these antidepressants had some very serious side effects that included nausea, sexual dysfunction, insomnia and gastrointestinal bleeding. Researchers began to realize that side effects also included violent, irrational behaviour, homicidal and suicidal tendencies. You would think that would be enough to make medical professionals very concerned about prescribing them but the fact is that sales of these drugs are bigger than ever and the advertising and promotional campaigns are enormous.

There are some who point out that part of the problem is the cozy relationship that has developed between the huge pharmaceutical manufacturers and much of the medical professional community. Governments are also guilty of not putting in place decent mechanisms to regulate the industry. Sadly, these huge companies are very much creating the demand for their drugs at this point more than meeting realistic needs. The market for anti-psychotics, antidepressants, and anti-anxiety drugs makes up billions of dollars in sales. There is evidence that they are doing more harm than good. The internet is a wonderful resource and you can go to alternative media like [alternet.org](http://alternet.org) or [globalresearch.ca](http://globalresearch.ca), where you can search for quality stories on this topic.

Many disenfranchised, lower income, dysfunctional people are being turned into zombies in too many cases so that huge companies can make a killing. It is imperative that we educate ourselves about these types of drugs and that we do not jump at the opportunity to receive a prescription for them. Take care of your mind or someone else will do it for you.





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**The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal:** 1-866-403-4688

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**Concordia University, Montreal:**

The Centre for Native Education has changed its name to the Aboriginal Student Resource Centre (ASRC). The new name is inclusive of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis students the centre serves and recognizes its role as a resource for the Concordia community. For any further details contact: [aboriginalcentre@concordia.ca](mailto:aboriginalcentre@concordia.ca) or 514-848-2424 ext. 7327.

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